

Recreational Trails + Greenways

2012 NC Building Code – 2009 ANSI A117.1

Q: I am writing to inquire about the compliance requirements for a home/lake owners association that is planning to extend a recreational trail/path around a lake owned by the association. The lake in question is located in [*site within NC*] and has had limited improvements (paths, piers, boat launches, etc.) in place since it was constructed (well before ADA). The existing path is not really accessible (dirt/pea gravel surface) and only exists on one side of the lake (perhaps 50% of the perimeter). The current project proposes to extend the path around the remainder of the lake.

Is there an ADA compliance requirement for this situation? If so, can you point me to the specific references that I can provide to the association?

A: Yes, they are. The relevant code sections are as follows:

NCBC 1104.2 states that *At least one accessible route shall connect accessible buildings, accessible facilities, accessible elements and accessible spaces that are on the same site. The exterior accessible path of travel shall be fixed, firm, nonslip and a minimum 48 inches (1219 mm) wide. Where handrails are provided, the measurement shall be between handrails.*

NCBC 1109.14.3 states *All recreational and sports facilities not falling within the purview of Sections 1109.14.1 or 1109.14.2 shall be accessible.*

ANSI 1101.2.2 Area of Sport Activity states *Areas of sport activity shall be served by an accessible route and shall not be required to be accessible except as provided in Chapter 11.*

The NC Building Code is the scoping document that directs the designer to the provisions in the standard. The NCBC also may have scoping provisions that will override language in the standard, which is the case with NCBC 1104.2 and ANSI 1101.2.2. Here, the NCBC 1104.2 scoping requirement for *'at least one accessible route'* connecting *'accessible spaces that are on the same site'* will override the ANSI 1101.2.2 standard language stating *'and shall not be required to be accessible except as provided in Chapter 11'*.

Q: What trail surface materials are acceptable for use, considering that some of that areas that the trail crosses may have permeability issues?

A: The materials that are acceptable for use on the trail provide options, depending on where the trail is and what the trail may be trying to accomplish (e.g., cross a stream, go over a culvert, the challenge the trail is intended to provide, and so forth). Accessible surface materials include:

1. Concrete
2. Asphalt
3. ¾ " minus limestone
4. Sta-Lok
5. Stabilizer Solution

Often a trail may be designed with an asphalt two-way inner path and exterior paths of crushed stone or fine crushed rejects for runners

American Tobacco Trail (all photos)

